

# THE JOURNAL



OF THE

## PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

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# PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Founded 1915

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## P.C.N.S. CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

January 25, 1989, Wednesday at 8:00 pm:

***Phillipine Banknotes under U.S. Administration***

Speaker: David W. Lange

February 22, 1989, Wednesday at 8:00 pm:

***Medieval Coinages of Western Europe***

ANA Slide Program

March 29, 1989, Wednesday at 8:00 pm:

***U.S. Paper Money, 1861-1923***

ANA Slide Program

Monthly meetings are held at The Telephone Museum  
1145 Larkin Street at Bush in San Francisco. Guests are invited.



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by David W. Lange



The slabs are coming! This could be good news or bad depending upon what one seeks to gain from numismatics. By the time that you read this, the American Numismatic Association Certification Service will be receiving coins for authentication and grading and also providing an encapsulation service for those who desire it. The latter option is a nearly exact duplication of the service provided by the Professional Coin Grading Service and the Numismatic Guaranty Corporation to whom ANACS has lost much of its patronage over the past few years.

This evolution may seem to present little cause for concern to those who are not collecting or dealing in United States coins, as this is the area primarily affected. However, the ANACS has for the past 18 months or so offered an authentication and grading service for ancient and modern world coins. This service has been little used since most collectors in these fields don't need it and because non-slabbed coins are not widely marketable to those who might. The potential for mass promotion in these areas may seem inviting to the dealer community. While there are presently no plans to offer the slabbing option for world and ancient coins, market forces may make this move a necessity if the ANACS is to remain competitive with the commercial grading services.

Also due to go into effect early this year is PCGS's slabbing of Canadian coins. This was a logical extension, as Canada's coins are the foreign coins least "foreign" to an American collector/investor. On the horizon, I see the coins of Mexico and Great Britain attaining a similar role in the marketplace and for similar reasons. Rising prices must inevitably result as the investment community seeks out virgin territory for exploitation.

In the ancient field, as for modern coins, it will be the most available and marketable coins which will be slabbed first. This is good business sense, as such coins can be sold to both investors and to non-numismatists seeking only a conversation piece. For example, it may one day be all but impossible to find an Athenian owl that has not been "encaged" in plastic. Coins having Biblical ties will be particularly susceptible. Imagine slabbed widow's mites!

Most of us in PCNS will neither need nor desire these services, yet we are powerless to prevent their spread. Collecting as we now know it will continue, but only within an increasingly plastic society. Beware, the slabs are coming!

## THE 1/24 AND 1/12 DIME MERCADO DE LEON COINS OF LEON, NICARAGUA

by Alan Luedeking

The copper coins or tokens of the market of Leon, Nicaragua, are known to exist in two unusual denominations, 1/24 dime and 1/12 dime. The denomination appears on the reverse surrounded by two simple laurel branches whose stems cross at six o'clock with a denticled border. The obverse of both pieces presents the words "Mercado de Leon" (Market of Leon) in three lines upon empty fields, also within a denticled border composed of elongated beads. The 1/24 dime measures 21.7mm diameter, is 1.35mm thick, and weighs 3.9 grams. The 1/12 dime has a diameter of 26.8mm, is 1.8mm thick, and weighs 7.3 grams.

Beyond this, very little is known about these fascinating pieces. The few sources of information available barely begin to lift the shroud of mystery which surrounds them, yet they offer tantalizing glimpses of the how and why of the coins' existence. At best, only a few insights may be drawn from the historical record of the time.

During the late 1840s, the California gold rush impelled Americans by the thousands to seek passage west. One main route of travel saw steamers travel down the Atlantic or through the Gulf of Mexico to Graytown, Nicaragua, whence a riverboat up the Rio San Juan brought passengers to Lake Nicaragua, where another boat ferried them across to the city of Granada. A short trek overland to the Pacific Ocean completed the crossing through Nicaragua and onward to California.



*Mercado de Leon 1/24th Dime*

Among the many thousands of travelers was William Walker, later to become one of the most infamous Americans in history. Having no luck in California, he turned to mercenary activities in support of his violent pro-slavery and "manifest destiny" views, and by late 1853 he turned his attention to Nicaragua. With a band of followers he offered his military services to the Liberal Party of Nicaragua, headquartered at Leon, in an effort to defeat the Conservatives of Granada in their longstanding civil war.



After numerous skirmishes, he defeated them. Then, tricking his employers, he grabbed power, declaring himself president of Nicaragua amidst the turmoil in the now very weakened government. Among those who saw with consternation this turn of events was Cornelius Vanderbilt of New York, whose Accessory Transit Company of Nicaragua was the main mover of the countless travellers going to and coming from California. He saw his highly profitable venture threatened and soon began aiding Nicaragua and the other four Central American countries which now, in this time of desperation, put aside their differences and banded together for a last time in an effort to rid themselves of the infamous Walker. By early 1857 wily Willy was fleeing for his life. He was later captured and executed in Honduras, with the help of the British, on September 12, 1860.

This, then, was the setting for the creation of our copper coins from Leon. U.S. half cents, large cents, half dimes and dimes had long been popular in Nicaragua, as thousands had been left behind by the eager gold seekers. Evidence of this is the decree of October 27, 1860, where the government of Nicaragua officially recognized and decreed as acceptable the circulation of U.S. half dimes and dimes dated 1860.<sup>1</sup> Now, as always, Nicaragua faced an acute shortage of minor coinage. Reflecting their appreciation of the quality and uniformity of U.S. coinage, the government issued the Accord of September 12, 1859, authorizing the Municipality of Leon to coin between one hundred and two hundred pesos of copper coins in the denominations of 1/2 and 1 centavo, specifically described such that "every 24 fractions thereof be equivalent to the value of one Real or Dime, since that is the fraction into which the **copper pieces now used are exchanged for the said dime . . .**" Further, the accord stated that the pieces were to bear the words "Mercado de Leon" on the obverse and the numeral denoting value "Centavo" and "1859" on the reverse.<sup>2</sup> Such pieces are unknown to exist today, but it is my opinion that the 1/24 and 1/12 dime pieces are the result of this decree and were made in late 1859 or early 1860. However, as they do not conform to the specifics of the decree, they may be the coins alluded to in the resolution justifying the decree where it hints about coins "now used" in the Market of Leon which are "exchanged" 24 to the dime.



*Mercado de Leon 1/12th Dime*



None of these pieces have ever been sold at auction with, perhaps, the exception of the 1/24 and 1/12 dime mentioned by Ole P. Eklund from the Cutting Collection of 1898 by L. H. Low.<sup>3</sup> Neither piece had ever been seen by Brian Stickney or Alcedo Almanzar at the time of publication of their work on Nicaragua,<sup>4</sup> nor apparently had Robert A. Lamb, who illustrated the 1/24 dime in a drawing (instead of a photograph) in his work on the coins of Nicaragua.<sup>5</sup> The only other illustration of the 1/24 dime known to me is the photograph in the work of Luis Cuadra Cea and the Central Bank of Nicaragua.<sup>6</sup> Incidentally, this work also describes the 1/24 dime as being equal to one centavo, which I believe to be incorrect, as its weight is slightly less than that of a U.S. half cent (which is 1/20 of a dime). The correct relationship should be 1/24 dime equals a half centavo. This error was taken up by Stickney and Almanzar who, in the introduction to their work, equate the 1/24 dime to one centavo, being "thus inflationary by nature" and so leading to numerous contemporary counterfeits. I disagree with this and ascribe the error to a misinterpretation of the authorizing decree in the Cuadra book,<sup>7</sup> where the ratio of the 1/24 fraction of a dime to a centavo is not made clear and also to the fact that the 1/12 dime piece was unknown to him.

Of the four pieces of the 1/24 dime known to me, of which I have seen three, there are two varieties with small differences in the letters. The two 1/12 dimes I have seen appear to be struck from the same dies. However, one of them has an "S" heavily counterstamped on the obverse, probably for use as a farm token in later years. One unsolved mystery is the location where they were struck, since Nicaragua has never been known to have had a mint. Though they attempted to establish one many times, they apparently never succeeded.

It is my opinion that both of these "Mercado de Leon" coins rank among the rarest of all Central American coins and are deserving of further research and study. This is sure to be hampered by the lack of data, since many of Nicaragua's records and historical documents were destroyed in the disastrous Managua earthquake of 1931, not to mention the chaotic communist revolution of 1979.

### Footnotes

1. Palma Martinez, Ildefonso, Moneda y Bancos en Nicaragua, 2nd Edition, 1975, page 22.
2. \_\_\_\_\_, pages 21 and 22.
3. Eklund, O.P., Catalogue of Tokens of Mexico, Central and South America and the West Indies, Unpublished Notes, The American Numismatic Society, 1911-1936, page 94.
4. Stickney, Brian, and Almanzar, Alcedo, F., The Coins and Paper Money of Nicaragua, 1974, page 5.
5. Lamb, Robert A., A Checklist of the Coins of Nicaragua, 1965, pages 3 and 15.
6. Cuadra Cea, Luis, ed., Banco Cetral de Nicaragua, Aspectos Historicos de la Moneda en Nicaragua, Vol. I, 1963, Plate 12, No.10.
7. \_\_\_\_\_, page 38.



## THE BOOKWORM

by David W. Lange

At what point does one become less a collector of coins than of coin books? Will, I haven't reached that point yet, but I do know a number of people who have. For them, building a numismatic library is not simply a means to an end but rather an end in itself. About ten years ago, these afflicted individuals banded together to form the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. The product of their collective passion is a quarterly journal that is aptly named *The Asylum*.

In the most recent issue, Volume VI, No. 4, the lead article chronicles the troubled lifetime of a German publication devoted to the collecting and trading of notgeld. Produced from 1919 to 1935, **Das Notgeld** parallels many such journals in its struggle to exist amidst inflation, an unpredictable economy, and the periodic apathy of subscribers and advertisers. That it did survive for so many years is a tribute to the energy and determination of its publishers.

In another article, the rarity of certain recent auction catalogues is detailed. It will come as a revelation to many that there are a number of catalogues that have become highly-sought rarities as a consequence of small printings, limited distribution, and the occasional warehouse catastrophe. Some of these are publications which many of us would have received as regular subscribers to a particular firm's catalogues. With the assembling of complete runs of modern auction catalogues being such a growing passion, this information is essential to the bibliophile.

Also to be found in this issue are essays and reminiscences about the pain and pleasures of book collecting. Announcements of new numismatic books and upcoming literature sales may also be found. The issue is completed with highlights of NBS activity and advertisements from dealers and collectors in the numismatic literature field. *The Asylum* makes for easy and informative reading. The members of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society are among the most knowledgeable and well-respected figures in numismatics. I encourage anyone with more than a passing interest in worldwide numismatic literature to become a member. Inquiries should be addressed to NBS, 4223 Iroquois Avenue, Lakewood, CA 90713.

*From 1874 to 1878, the silver dollar was not a legal tender issue due to the 1874 revision of coinage laws.*



# ARMENIAN COINS AND ARMENIAN HISTORY

by L. A. Saryan

Most coin collectors are only dimly familiar with the geographic location, history, and numismatic role of Armenia. Yet this ancient land offers exciting possibilities to coin enthusiasts in numerous specialties: ancient Greek and Roman coinage, issues of Byzantium, Iran, the Arabic caliphate, the Crusades, 20th century bank notes, tokens and modern medallic sculpture.

The coinage of native Armenian kings includes three principal dynasties and some lesser ones as well. The main periods are the coinage of Sophene Armenia (third to first centuries BC), the coinage of Tigranes the Great and other rulers of the Artaxiad line (second and first centuries BC), and the coinage of Cilician Armenia (1080-1375 AD). The paper money of modern Armenian states may be considered a fourth period.

This short article obviously cannot do justice to all of these areas.<sup>1</sup> But in some measure, I hope to provide the general collector with a better appreciation of the role Armenians have played in ancient and medieval coinage and elucidate the relationship between the coinage and the historical record.

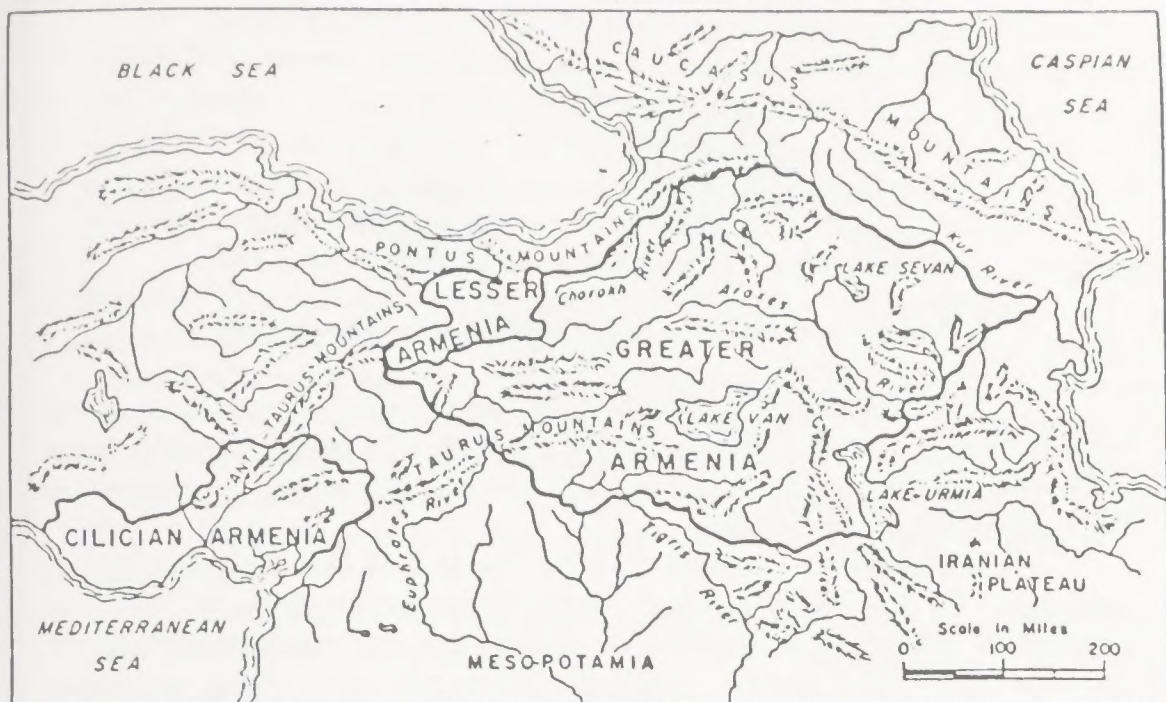
Assembling a representative collection of Armenian coins can be fairly inexpensive. A number of ancient and medieval types, as well as most twentieth century bank notes and medallions, sell at prices between \$10 and \$50 each. Minor varieties run between \$100 and \$1,000. The real prizes, though, may be beyond the reach of any collector. Safely esconced in museum cabinets, these coins are kept under glass for all to see but none to own.

Armenia's bittersweet history can be best understood in relation to her geographic position. Situated in eastern Asia Minor and the southern Caucasus, Armenia has for centuries been a buffer state caught between and coveted by larger powers. Native kings controlled the mountain fastnesses, while invaders from every direction sought to subdue Armenia for her mineral wealth, her horses and pasture land, her produce and her strategic location. Trade routes crossed Armenian territory, stimulating commerce and creating a need for a medium of exchange.

Armenian history *per se* begins in the seventh and sixth centuries BC at nearly the same time that the kingdoms of western Asia Minor were first becoming acquainted with the use of impressed lumps of metal as money. Located only a few hundred miles to the east, Armenia was destined to be drawn into commercial relations with the Greek and Persian worlds at the dawn of her history.

Unfortunately, we know less about the earliest period than we would like. Armenian was not a written language, so the only historical testimony is by foreign and often hostile writers. Virtually no excavations have been carried out in that part of historic Armenia which is today occupied by Turkey. Without such evidence, the numismatic record assumes an essential role in the reconstruction of pre-Christian Armenia.





*Map of Historical Armenia  
from R. Hovannisian's Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*

When Alexander the Great conquered the East, Armenia comprised two satrapies under the rule of Achaemenian Persia. Shortly after Alexander's death, the Armenian kings of Sophene (southeastern Armenia) and upper Armenia (near Mt. Ararat and modern Yerevan) began to assert their independence from neighboring states. Of these two separate kingdoms, Sophene was in closer contact with the Hellenic world and was the first to issue coins.

Sophene Armenia is a difficult period of Armenian numismatics. One may glean some idea of how difficult from the fact that Dr. Paul Bedoukian, the world's foremost Armenian numismatic scholar, waited for more than three decades before turning his talents to his opening chapter.<sup>2</sup> The problem, in a nutshell, is that there are virtually no written or archeological records and fewer than 100 known coin specimens from this period, barely enough data to enable a scholar to propose a satisfactory classification.

Bedoukian has identified coins from at least nine kings of Sophene and Commagene: Sames, Arsames I and II, Xerxes, Abdissares, and a few others who reigned from about 260-34 BC. The known examples, all of which are in copper and very rare, depict the ruler wearing a conically-shaped native headgear and record his title in Greek letters. In some instances, the numismatic record constitutes the only available evidence that a king by that name reigned.



*Bronze coin of Abdissares, king of Sophene Armenia (ca. 210 BC)*

It was the destiny of Sophene to be eventually absorbed by upper Armenia into a unified Armenian state. In 190 BC, upper Armenia came under the control of one Artaxias under whose leadership the illustrious Artaxiad dynasty was founded.

Classifying the Artaxiad coinage, like that of Sophene, was not an enterprise for the faint-hearted. After years of study,<sup>3</sup> in 1978 Dr. Bedoukian published the definitive monograph on this subject<sup>4</sup> which catalogs about 600 known specimens from this era. Even so, many questions remain unanswered.

The Artaxiad King Tigranes II the Great (95-56 BC) ranks unquestionably as the most celebrated king of Armenian history. It was he who finally consolidated all the Armenian-speaking clans under the control of a central authority. At its height, his empire stretched from the shores of the Caspian Sea (near present day Baku) to the Mediterranean seacoast of Syria and Cilicia. An alliance with his father-in-law Mithridates VI of Pontus enabled the two to jointly challenge the ambitions of Rome for supremacy in the East.



*Bronze coin of Tigranes the Great (95-56 BC), with statue of Tyche reverse.*

Before Tigranes, Armenian kings had, at best, issued small copper pieces. Now, from mints at Antioch and Damascus in Syria and Artaxata (near present Yerevan) and Tigranocerta (near present Diyarbakir) in Armenia, comparatively large numbers of silver drachms (approximately 4 grams) and tetradrachms (approximately 15.5 grams) as well as coppers of multiple styles and denominations poured forth.

All of these coins present us with the portrait of a monarch of peculiar tastes. Tigranes eschews the bare or at best diademed head of his neighbors and contemporaries to the west (Mithridates of Pontus and Ariobarzanes of Cappadocia) in favor of an ornate headdress known as the Armenian tiara. Likewise, he rejects the standard beard of the Parthians, his neighbors and adversaries to the east, preferring to be seen on his coins clean-shaven in the Hellenistic tradition. Thus does Tigranes assert his individuality and independence of both friend and foe.



Some of his coins, too, by their inscriptions, proclaim his vanity in no uncertain terms. Inscriptions are in Greek and read, according to one of two formulas, either ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΣ ΤΙΓΡΑΝΟΥ (King Tigranes), or ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΝ ΤΙΓΡΑΝΟΥ (King of Kings Tigranes). The pompous latter title was wrested from the Parthians from whom the Armenians captured a number of provinces early in Tigranes' reign.

The lofty Armenian tiara sported by Tigranes and his successors appears to be a unique Armenian contribution to numismatic art. It expresses a mysterious symbolism which is today at best imperfectly understood and at worst completely unintelligible. The usually five-peaked (on side view) crown has given rise to endless speculation regarding the number of peaks.<sup>5</sup> The headband shows an eight-ray sun flanked symmetrically by two eagles facing outward with heads twisted toward the sun. Our best guess is that these represent some pagan religious concepts.

The reign of Tigranes was Armenia's sole interlude of imperialism in more than 2,500 years of history. He had formed his empire by taking advantage of internal dissension in Parthia and Seleucid Antioch. Armenian lands welcomed his unifying rule, and he wisely allowed native rulers to continue as his clients. It was his alliance with Mithridates against Rome which proved his undoing.

Rome would have none of these upstart barbarians and sent armies against Pontus and Armenia. Tigranes was briefly defeated by Lucullus but was not subdued until 66 BC when Pompey reduced Tigranes' territory to Armenia proper and some immediately contiguous provinces.

Tigranes was succeeded by his son Artavasdes II (56-4 BC) who, it is said, was a ruler of cultured tastes and literary accomplishment. His preoccupation with drama may have inspired him to play both ends against the middle in the conflict between Rome and Parthia. Though nominally an ally of Rome, Artavasdes hastily realigned himself with the Parthians after the disastrous Roman defeat at Carrhae in 53 BC.

If the coins of Tigranes are at least accessible to the collector of modest means, those of Artavasdes are to be had only after extraordinary pursuit and expense. Only three or four tetradrachms of Artavasdes are known. With prices ranging between \$30,000 and \$70,000, it is obvious that the average collector will never have the opportunity to add this prize to his collection.

The silver drachms and tetradrachms of Artavasdes present us with a perplexing question to ponder as well. After Tigranes' defeat and the loss of most of his empire, one would think that he had lost the right to use the title "King of Kings" on his coinage. Certainly, the claim had been reduced to a hollow boast. Why, then, does his son record as his own title, not merely "King of Kings", but on some coins ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΝ ΑΡΤΑΪΑΣΔΟΥ ΘΕΙΟΥ—King of Kings Artavasdes God?

The tradition of coinage lived on at a reduced level until the extinction of the Artaxiand line in 6 AD. Armenia retained her importance in Roman affairs, the numismatic witness to which is the long series of Roman



*Bronze coin of the city of Artaxata, believed to date ca. 181 AD.  
Photograph from P. Arakelian's Outlines of the History of Ancient Armenian Art.  
(Photo enlarged to show detail)*



imperial coinage referring to Armenia. Emperors such as Augustus, Nero, Trajan, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, among others, issued such pieces in all three metals.<sup>6</sup> These coins are actively sought today by collectors.

From the time of Christ to about 1100 AD, we have only isolated instances of Armenian coinage. During this period, Armenia became a Christian state (301 AD) and within about a century acquired both a unique alphabet and a written literature. Its kings were often dependent upon and used the coinage of neighboring powers such as Rome, Byzantium, Iran and the Arabs which were sometimes minted on Armenian territory.

Two rare examples of a native coinage stand out. One is the city coinage of Artaxata, an important center of crafts and commerce as well as Armenia's capital for many centuries, situated near modern Yerevan. A few different varieties of these scarce bronze pieces, thought to date to the second century AD, are known. The bust of the city goddess wearing a turreted crown appears on the obverse, and a winged victory is seen on the reverse. The inscription, ΑΡΤΑΞΙΣΑΤΟΝ ΜΕΤΡΟΠΟΛΕΟΣ (City of Artaxata), is in Greek.

The other type is attributed to Gorige, king of the minor domain of Tashir-Tzoraked (Lori) in northeastern Armenia. This piece probably dates to the late tenth century and is the earliest known to carry an inscription in Armenian characters. It, too, is in bronze and very rare. It resembles contemporary Byzantine coins and like them carries a strong religious content. The obverse shows the bust of Christ and an abbreviated inscription which stands for "Jesus Christ". The reverse is entirely occupied by an inscription which reads DER OKNEH GORIGEH GORABAGHAD (Lord help Gorige the Curopalatus).

The medieval barony and kingdom of Armenian Cilicia offers collectors the most varied and extensive series in Armenian numismatics. Unlike the ancients, these coins carry familiar symbols of the Christian faith and inscriptions in the Armenian alphabet. Coins have survived in all three principal metals. Dr. Bedoukian records specimens from no fewer than five princes and fourteen kings of this dynasty, spanning a time period of almost three centuries.



*Silver double tram of Levon I of Cilician Armenia (1189-1219)*

For 118 years, from 1080 to 1198, Cilicia was a barony ruled by princes of the Roupenian family. In 1198, Prince Levon II elevated the barony to the rank of a kingdom and became the first crowned king of Cilician Armenia. Now known as Levon I, this ambitious and energetic leader immediately tackled the task of consolidating his rule. For the first time in history, Armenia had an outlet to the sea, and Levon took advantage of this in his economic program.

Cilicia soon became an entrepôt of international commerce. Goods from Asia and Europe changed hands in her marts; caravans laden with silk and spices from the interior were sold to seafaring traders from Venice and Genoa to whom Levon had extended special privileges. These merchants were assessed reduced duties on shipments passing through the country by land or by sea.

The consequence of this far-sighted policy was an economic boom which benefited not only Armenia but also the nearby Crusader states. Armenia's commercial success resulted in a militarily powerful Christian kingdom which shielded the northern frontier of the Latin states from attacks by Turkoman tribes.

Levon also reorganized the Armenian mint. The Cilician princes had struck only comparatively scarce bronze pieces, but shortly after Levon's coronation the production burgeoned. During his two-decade reign as king, he introduced several new types of coins including two extremely rare styles of gold pieces, a silver double tram series in three separate denominations, large quantities of silver coronation trams and regular trams, billon deniers with Latin and Armenian inscriptions and common bronze tanks.



*Bronze tank of Levon I of Cilician Armenia*

Levon's silver coins stand out for their abundance, high and consistent fineness and excellent quality workmanship. The weight standard followed that of the dirhem rather than the smaller billon deniers of the Crusaders. The Armenians were able to obtain ample supplies of silver for coinage at a time when the eastern Mediterranean region was undergoing a severe silver shortage.

The silver double tram of Levon I (about 5.5 grams) must rank as one of the most ambitious coins of its day. Its existence is evidence that Levon initially contemplated a coinage in multiple denominations, and its large size gave ample opportunity for diecutters to display their skill. The obverse shows the king seated on a throne holding in one hand a globus



cruciger and in the other a scepter in the shape of a fleur-de-lis. The reverse shows a lion with a crowned human head (a pun on the king's name) holding a long-staffed processional cross.

The inscription on these coins is in uppercase Armenian script, the exact spelling of which varies from die to die according to the available space. The complete obverse reading is LEVON TAKAVOR AMENAYN HAYOTS EH (Levon is king of all the Armenians) which, by the way, was an exaggeration. On the reverse, the full reading was GAROGHOUTYAMPN ASDOUDSO EH TAKAVOR (King by the will of God). There was almost never enough space in the inscription circle to write the complete inscription, so diecutters had to be satisfied with various abbreviations.

The principal silver currency of the realm during Levon's reign was trams and coronation trams, and these formed the metrological basis of the coinage of his successors. Both types weighed close to 2.9 grams; these are abundant today as a result of hoard discoveries.

Coronation trams show the king appealing to the Virgin Mary for divine intercession on behalf of his kingdom. Two reverses are known; a fairly common one depicts a pair of rampant lions flanking a central cross, and a rare muled variety borrows the single lion reverse from the double tram series.

Regular trams of Levon borrow designs from both the double trams and the coronation trams. The obverse of the regular tram shows a throned king holding a globus cruciger and fleur-de-lis, and the reverse has twin rampant lions facing a long cross. This is the most common of all Cilician Armenian coins, and many thousands are known. The issue was so extensive that numerous die variations exist; the collector interested in varieties is constantly tantalized by the possibility of discovering hitherto unrecorded examples.

Other noteworthy Cilician Armenian coins that can easily be obtained include the bronze tanks of Levon I and Hetoum I, the regular and bilingual trams of Hetoum I,<sup>8</sup> and the trams and takvorins (takvorins were trams of reduced weight and fineness) of later kings such as Levon II and Gosdantin IV.

Armenian coinage ceased after 1375, the start of a long, dark age during which Armenia was crushed by the depredations of Turkish hordes. In 1915, over 1-1/2 million Armenians were brutally massacred by the Ottoman Turkish state in what is today recognized as the first genocide of modern times. The land was left in smoke and ruins, and destitute refugees fled to safety in foreign lands. But within three years, arising phoenix-like from the ashes of this holocaust, an independent Armenian Republic was born in the Caucasus. Today, it is succeeded by the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, one of the fifteen constituent republics of the Soviet Union. Between 1918 and 1924, reborn Armenia issued numerous varieties of paper currency, some of which show considerable artistic accomplishment and appeal.<sup>9</sup>



250 ruble bank note of the independent Republic of Armenia,  
one of three artistic bank notes of 1919. (shown reduced 28%)

As has been the case for other nations, the coinage of Armenia has had its share of ups and downs, sometimes enjoying periods of extraordinary interest and aesthetic merit. For nearly 2,500 years, it has been a faithful mirror of her history, art, religion and culture. Collectors will find in Armenia a field that offers a refuge from the exasperating grading and slabbing controversies that are robbing modern numismatics of its pleasure. Here collectors are offered an arena which promises great possibilities for self-education, teaching, research and discovery, the very qualities that give this hobby its timeless and universal appeal.



## Footnotes

1. A convenient summary of Armenian numismatics may be found in L. A. Saryan, "Armenian Coinage Through the Centuries," Ararat, Vol. 29, No.1, Winter 1988, pp.35-40. For abstracts of the literature on Armenian numismatics, see Y. T. Nercessian, Armenian Numismatic Bibliography and Literature (Los Angeles, 1984).
2. P. Z. Bedoukian, "Coinage of the Armenian Kingdoms of Sophene and Commagene," ANS Museum Notes, Vol. 28, 1983, pp.71-88.
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*All actual-size coin photographs used in this article are by Dr. Paul Z. Bedoukian.*

# The Syngraphics Scene

by Ken Barr

## The Syngraphist's Library

First, a definitions. From Gene Hessler's The Comprehensive Catalog of U.S. Paper Money:

A new word was born with the publication of the first edition of this catalog. Syngraphics will be used in this book to denote the collecting and study of paper money. . . . The Reverend Richard Doyle, Chairman of the Department of Classical Languages at Fordham University in New York, coined the long-needed word at the request of the author. The word comes from the Greek "syn", meaning with or together, and "graphikos" which means to write. . . . In Latin, "syngrapha" meant a written agreement to pay, a promissary note, a bond.

In the fourteen years since the publication of that edition, "syngraphics" has made a slow but steady march towards as common a usage as its predecessors "numismatics" and "philately".

Now that we know what a syngraphist is ( and I hope at least a few readers will consider themselves as such), what in the world should be considered as standard references in this wide-ranging field? While there will be as many opinions on this matter as there are people to be asked, the following is one man's opinion on the subject.

These works are recommended as core holdings in any good syngraphic library. Many other works would be recommended for advanced/ specialized syngraphist's library, but space does not permit listing them here. Please consult the Coin World Almanac or the ANA Library Catalog for additional information on specialized works.

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*Continued on page 22*



# THE 1847 COPPER CENT OF HAWAII

by Frank J. Strazzarino

The first official coins of Hawaii were the copper cents of 1847 issued by King Kamehameha III who ruled from 1825 to 1854. The coins were issued under the laws of 1845 and 1846 and depict the facing bust of His Majesty on the obverse surrounded by the words "King Kamehameha II, Ka Moi". The reverse bears the inscription "Aupuni Hawaii" and the denomination "Hapa Haneri" which means hundredth part.

These coins were produced from two obverse and four reverse dies. The first obverse die shows a large bust of His Majesty and a crosslet 4 in the date. On the second obverse die the bust and lettering are smaller, the "4" in the date is not crossed and the name starts at the point of the right epaulet. The first reverse die shows the wreath with 15 berries, the second with 18 berries, the third with 17 berries and the fourth with only 13 berries. No proof specimens of these coins are known to exist. The issue was never accepted by the natives, and hundreds of pieces were thrown in the sea and thus destroyed.



*1847 Hawaiian Cent*

There has been much speculation concerning the origin of this coin. The dies are believed to have been made in Massachusetts and the coins themselves possibly struck in Philadelphia, but no records have been located to verify any of this information. The coins are 27mm in diameter, the quantity minted was 100,000 and, although obsolete, are quite desired by collectors.

The State of Hawaii, 50th state of the United States, consists of eight main islands and numerous smaller islands of coral and volcanic origin situated in the central Pacific Ocean 2,400 miles from San Francisco. Mauna Loa, on the island of Hawaii, is the largest active volcano in the world. A great tourist center, Hawaii also is noted for its sugar and pineapple production.

The islands, originally populated by Polynesians who traveled from the Society Islands, were discovered by British Navigator Captain James

*Continued on page 22*

## **JULIAN II, The Philosopher The Apostate Emperor of Rome**

In 361 AD, Julian II became the sole ruler of the Roman Empire and began a remarkable bid to replace Christianity with the old pagan imperial religion. His paganism earned him the title *Apostate*. His bronze coinage clearly reflects his attempts to change the official religion of the Empire.

Julian was born in 332 AD at Constantinople, the new city which Constantine the Great had built and dedicated just two years before. Constantine had also proclaimed Christianity as the imperial religion in 328 AD. Julian was a nephew of Constantine and was about 5 years old when his uncle died. Constantine's sons immediately set out to kill all male relatives who might pose any threat to their imperial claims. Julian's father was murdered in the bloodbath, but, probably due to their youth, Julian and his brother Gallus were spared.

After disposing of other potential claimants to the throne, Constantine's son's—Constantius II, Constantine II and Constans—started on each other. Constantine II quarrelled over territorial claims with his younger brother Constans, and was killed in ambush on his way to fight him. When Constans was killed by the usurper Magnentius, Constantius II entered the fray as the sole legitimate claimant. He defeated Magnentius and found himself without a co-ruler, a state of affairs which threatened to leave the succession open to usurpers, several of whom arose promptly.

Constantius II, remembering his two surviving cousins, made Gallus (Julian's brother) his new co-ruler. Gallus was not a good ruler, and Constantius recalled him to the court at Milan in 354 AD. Gallus obeyed but was arrested by Constantius' guards enroute. He was hurriedly tried and executed leaving Julian as the only surviving male relative to the emperor. Constantius realized that Julian would probably be annoyed by now, so Julian was immediately arrested.

About a year later, Julian was unexpectedly given the rank of Caesar, married to his cousin Helena (the young sister of the Emperor) and placed in charge of the imperial troops in Gaul. In 360, he was ordered to bring his troops east to fight the Persians, but Julian's forces rebelled, naming Julian emperor and forcing a confrontation between Julian and Constantius. Constantius died of a fever before the engagement, leaving Julian the undisputed ruler of the Empire in late 361.

Julian had been educated by Greek tutors. He had a love for philosophy, and he had secretly converted to a mystical pagan cult. He believed the problems of the Empire were to a great extent the result of the failure to honor the traditional gods of Rome. He also had seen what happened to his family during the previous 35 years and probably felt that the new religion was at least partially responsible. His sympathy was clearly with the "old ways" while the public had been converted to the new religion.





*Christogram coinage of Magnentius and the Apis Bull of Julian II*

At first, Julian continued the general style of bronze coinage which had been issued by Constantius II. His coinage showed a portrait of the emperor on the obverse, sometimes in military garb holding a spear and shield. His reverse was an inscription in a wreath over a mintmark which identified the issuing mint. The only notable change was the absence of Christian symbols such as the *Christogram* which had begun appearing on coins before Constantine's death and had been continued by his sons.

In December of 362 AD, an Apis Bull statue was discovered in Roman territory in North Africa, and Julian saw an opportunity to exhibit his support for the old religion. He ordered the bull brought to the city of Antioch where it was set up in a central area for the people to worship. Julian's efforts for popular support of the old religion were scorned. The public openly laughed at his prize from Africa.

Julian had another idea for forcing the recognition of the old religion as symbolized by the Apis Bull. He ordered that a new bronze coinage be struck of increased size and value with the reverse design showing the bull. All 14 of the mints in the Empire issued this coinage until Julian's death on June 26, 363 AD. Although this was a relatively short-lived design, the volume of production was immense at the major mints due to its intended propaganda purpose. Both types of Julian's bronze coins are readily available to collectors of modest means.

Julian's successor, Jovian, immediately changed the design of the large denomination bronze coinage to a figure of the emperor holding the *labarum*, a standard with the *Christogram*.

Julian's *apostate* coinage ended after only 6 months of circulation, and no Roman ruler ever again made such an open bid to abandon Christianity. Julian removed preferential treatment for Christians, but he seems to have been satisfied to try to gain support for the old religion without resorting to widespread violence. His moderation has led many historians to call him *The Philosopher* rather than *The Apostate*. ■

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*From the Idle Mind of Stephen M. Huston* is a regular column of The Journal which focuses on ancient and medieval times.

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**Hawaii, continued from page 19**

Cook in 1778. He named them the Sandwich Islands. King Kamehameha the Great united the islands under one kingdom (1795-1810) which endured until 1893 when Queen Lilioukalani was deposed and a provisional government established. This was followed by a republic which governed Hawaii until 1898 when it ceded itself to the United States. Hawaii was organized as a territory in 1900 and attained statehood on August 21, 1959.

The Royal Palace, which is being well-preserved and maintained, located near downtown Honolulu, is easily accessible and a popular tourist attraction. Since attaining statehood, the population of Hawaii has increased steadily and now numbers over 1,000,000 people. The capital is Honolulu.

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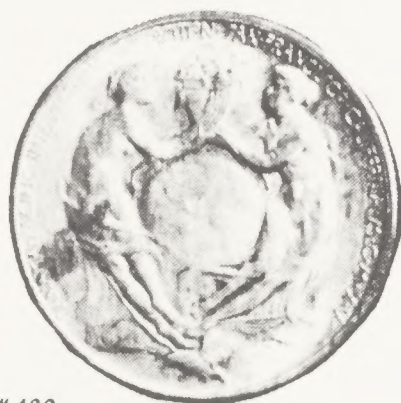


# SAN FRANCISCO THROUGH ITS TOKENS

## *The Pan-Pacific International Exposition*

by Jerry F. Schimmel

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915 was BIG. It ran east to west from Van Ness Avenue to Crissy Field in the Presidio and from the bay to Chestnut Street and parts of Lombard. It totally covered what is now the Marina District. The rotunda of the Palace of Fine Arts of the fair now stands rebuilt to remind us of an exposition designed to restore interest and confidence in the Bay Area for investment after the 1906 earthquake and especially since the Panama Canal had been opened.



*Hibler and Kappen # 400*

The bronze art deco medal shown is 38mm and was the official souvenir. On the obverse, winged Mercury opens the canal locks for the ship Argo. The reverse shows two females representing two hemispheres of the world entwined around the globe.



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